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## CHRONICLE-UNION.

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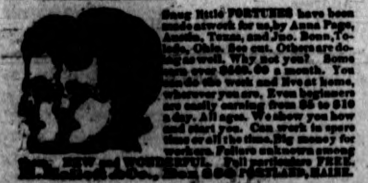
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## CHRONICLE-UNION, THE PIONEER

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### THE OLDEST MAN ON EARTH.

He Lives in Bogota and His Age Is One Hundred and Eighty Years.

The oldest man in the world is a citizen of Bogota, in the Republic of San Salvador. This new Methuselah, says the Chicago Tribune, declares that he is one hundred and eighty years old, and it would seem he flatters himself, for his neighbors give the assurance that he is older than he says he is.

He is a half-breed named Michael Solis, whose existence was revealed to Dr. Louis Hernandez by one of the oldest planters in the locality, who as a child knew Solis as a centenarian. They have found in 1719 his signature among those of persons who contributed to the building of a Franciscan convent which exists near San Sebastian. His skin is like parchment, his long hair of the whiteness of snow envelops his head like a turban, and his look is so keen that it made a disagreeable impression on the doctor.

Interrogated by the doctor, he answered complacently that his great age was due to his regular mode of living, and to his never giving up to any excess of any sort whatever.

"I never eat but once a day," said he, "but I never use any but the strongest and most nourishing foods. My meals last a half hour, for I believe it is impossible to eat more in that time than the body can digest in twenty-four hours. I fast the first and fifteenth day of each month, and on those days I drink as much water as I can bear. I always let my food become cold before I touch it. It is to these things that I attribute my great age."

### A GAMBLER'S SUPERSTITIONS.

He Smokes Good Cigars When Losing and Poor Ones When Winning.

There is a well-known sport, whose face is a standing portrait in the gallery of Chestnut street habits, who is particularly heralded among his brethren of chance by the brand of cigars he smokes, says the Philadelphia Inquirer. If he wins heavily on the track all his friends know it by the terrific smell of the vile tobacco in his smolders. If he is a loser they are aware of it by the delicate perfume of the curling smoke of the wreaths of a fragrant Havana. What induces the follower of the goddess of chance to thus contrarily denote his financial condition never could be learned until a week ago, when the quality of his cigar was so execrable as to call forth a protest from his comrades, and then he said:

"It's my only superstition, boys. If I win and should smoke a good cigar luck'd go back on me so hard the next day I'd be in the poor-house in a week. But if I am a loser never very heavy, understand, and light two or three Conchas, d'ye see? I'll call the turn on bad luck. When I'm playing in great form then's when I draw on cigars made from cabbages. It's my experience that bad cigars and good luck are friends; and Havanas travel in the wake of the losing sport."

### BLUFFED BY A DUMMY.

Clever Scheme of an Old Timer to Ward Off the Law Mischance.

The Trinidad (Col.) Chronicle relates an incident of Joe Simpson, an old timer, who recently died in that city. Joe owned a piece of land near town, on which he one day found a corps of sprayers running a line. He promptly drove them off with a 44-caliber revolver. A warrant was sworn out for his arrest, but the deputy sheriff who attempted to serve it was held up by the furious frontiersman, his gun and belt emptied and himself sent back to town quicker than he came.

Anticipating a visit from a posse of men, Simpson took an old suit of clothes, stuffed it with grass, placed the dummy in a chair at the door of his cabin, surrounded the figure with a wide-brimmed sombrero and arranged a broom to give the innocent effigy the appearance of preparing to send a bullet through any one who might approach. Simpson then hid in an adjacent cornfield and awaited developments. The posse finally arrived, and, catching sight of the figure in the doorway, held a hurried consultation and finally beat a retreat. Simpson was a highly amused spectator of the performance, and the next day he came to town and gave himself up.

### A TWO-TWENTY GAIT.

It Was a Great Record Once, but Would Be Slow Now.

It is now more than thirty-one years since a trotting horse made a record of 2:30 or better in harness, says the Omaha World-Herald. The distinguished animal which performed the feat was the mare Flora Temple, and she trotted her mile October 15, 1859. That event made Flora Temple the talk of the country, and most persons predicted that her record would never be beaten. Yet since then three hundred and seventy-five other trotters have beat the 2:30 record, and each year the number greatly increases. In 1890 it was increased over 50 per cent, the number for the year being ninety-one. This wonderful increase in speed of our racing horses is one of the evidences of the marvelous perfection of modern methods. It is impossible to read a history of the turf even for a single year without being struck by the great advance, here as elsewhere. What seemed an impossibility thirty years ago was accomplished by nearly one hundred young horses last year. In view of this great increase in average speed of our racers, who shall say that the record of a mile in 2:05 by Maid S. will long remain the best?

### MIRACULOUS POWER.

The Strange Career of Moffat, the Conjuror.

Marvelous Feats of Mind-Reading and Wonderful Visions of Distant Objects Obtained Through the Power of Second Sight.

The death was lately announced of Herr Moffat, the celebrated second-sight reader and conjurer, at Bozeman, Idaho, in the act of swallowing a sword, which severed his jugular vein, and the conjurer bled to death in a few minutes.

Herr Moffat, or Francis Morell, writes a correspondent of the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, was a resident of St. Louis, and there his wonderful talent, which made him the peer of any and led him before the crowned heads of Europe and Asia, was developed. He was a very peculiar boy in youth and was considered a crank. He lived alone with his widowed mother, supporting her by working in a stove factory. His spare moments he spent in the study of magic, and the attic of his humble little home was transformed into a chemical shop. When he was seven years old one day he suddenly burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter. His mother asked him what pleased him so much. The boy replied that he saw his father (who was then living, but not at home) running rapidly down the mountain side trying to overtake a jug of whisky which he had let fall. The jug rolled part of the way down the declivity, but was caught by the old man before he got to the bottom. When the father reached home he confirmed the whole story to the great surprise of all. After this the boy excited much talk in the neighborhood in which he lived. About two years later the Morells were visited by a friend named Robert Vinton, with other relatives and acquaintances from Philadelphia, who came to test the lad's miraculous power, asked him various questions, and, among other things, inquired what was then going on at his (Vinton's) home in Philadelphia.

The boy described the house, which he had never seen, stated that it was built partly of brick and partly of stone, that there was a lake in front of the house, which had recently been drained, and concluded with a description of the people in the house, and of two persons, a man and a woman, who were sitting on the porch.

When Vinton reached his home in Philadelphia he inquired who had been at his home at the day and hour he had held the conversation with young Morell. He learned that there had been a shower of rain at the time and that the people who were fishing in the lake had run to the house to escape the rain. The persons who were on the porch had been faithfully described, even to the color of their hair and eyes. In short, every detail given by the boy was proven to be accurate.

He became involved in a quarrel once with a young man named Turner. Turner was to call on a young lady, and being met on his way by the young mind-reader, Morell, who was himself in love with the same young lady, they spoke to each other and passed on. Young Morell sat down on a stump and, bowing his head, conducted his mind to the parlor in which his rival and the young lady were conversing. In the course of the young man's call he proposed and was rejected. This made Morell happy. Meeting Turner on the street next day, he tantalized him about his rejection by the young lady the night preceding. Words were exchanged, and Morell drew a pistol, but friends standing by interposed, and no harm came of the quarrel. But Morell fell into intemperate habits and lost his good name. His habit, when asked to exercise his faculty of second-sight seeing, was to hold his head downward after closing his eyes. After waiting for some time, apparently in deep thought, he would declare what he saw in his visions. He was sometimes found alone in the fields, sitting on a stump and crying. On being asked the cause of his grief he said he saw great numbers of men engaged in killing each other. Although he had never up to that time seen a ship, a battle or a cannon, he described military and naval battles during the war of the rebellion as if he were an onlooker.

After the war, when he was about twenty-four years of age, another gentleman from Philadelphia, who had heard much of him, became interested, believing him to be possessed of a noble gift, and exhibited his wonderful power over the United States, drawing immense crowds in all the large cities. While in St. Louis, in 1873, he was asked by a man in one of the many throngs that came to see him: "What he was doing with that pocket-book" (intimating that the young fellow had stolen it). "Nothing. You're the man who has stolen it," was the reply, and upon being searched by a policeman who was present, the man was found to have a pocket-book with several hundred dollars in it, which was immediately identified by a gentleman present as his. The man was arrested and found to be Black Hal, a notorious confidence man and pickpocket.

In 1879 he began a tour of the Old World which lasted seven years, where he afterwards returned, exhibiting himself over the country. His death recalled many incidents which were related by the older citizens of St. Louis. His life was a strange and shocking one.

### MIGHTY ENGINES OF WAR.

PROF. SCHRIEBER has invented a machine for producing artificial smoke on a battle-field, which, it is believed, will be of great value to counteract on some occasions the introduction of smokeless powder.

COLONEL DEBRANS and M. Schneider, the directors of the Call and Crescent works, respectfully declare that it is unnecessary to replace steel guns by bronze cannon, in view of the adoption of smokeless powder.

The total number of guns of the German navy is 881; France, 1,942; Italy, 606; Russia, 688; Austria, 588; Great Britain, 2,587; Netherlands, 400; Spain, 247; Sweden and Norway, 150-147; Turkey, 366; Denmark, 87; China, 300; United States, 361.

The new gun for the German artillery is of steel, and weighs, without the carriage, 840 pounds, against the old gun's 900 pounds. With carriage it has a weight of 2,700 pounds, against 3,000. The new ammunition wagons weigh 3,980 pounds, the old 4,440.

M. VIELLE, prominent as an inventor of smokeless powder, by means of a delicate process of registration finds that the pressures at the moment of burning the powder do not shed themselves uniformly over the gun throughout its length, but that a wave of pressure starts at the seat of the powder and transmits itself.

This apparently almost inevitable failure of some one of the thirty, or thereabouts, machines employed in working a fully-equipped great gun has caused a reaction in England in favor of smaller guns and of doing away with as much machinery as possible. The Thunderer's 100-tonners have been taken out and replaced with 90-tonners, worked entirely by hand.

### ART GLEANINGS.

WALDO STORR, son of the American sculptor, is to design the marble decorations for Baron Rothschild's house.

EXPERTS say that the buried city of Pompeii has not yet yielded up a third of its artistic treasures; that at the present rate of progress seventy years will elapse before it is thoroughly unearthed.

LUDWIG A. ABBEY and John T. Sargent are to decorate a room each in the new Public Library of Boston. It is expected that this building when completed will rank with the finest in America. It is hoped to have each room of the edifice decorated by a different artist.

BRAXTON IVES, the New York millionaire, is to sell his famous collection of old manuscripts and rare pottery at public sale in March. The collection, an unrivaled one in this country, is worth about \$300,000, and much curiosity is manifested as to the price the gems will bring at auction.

The question has arisen, whether Polynesian architecture is of Asiatic or South American origin; and it is thought that the preponderance of evidence is in favor of the Asiatic theory. Indeed, it seems probable that the American continent was influenced by the same migration from Asia which gave the copper-colored races to Polynesia.

THIRTEEN unsold paintings found in Jules Dupre's studio after his death have realized at auction 209,700 francs (\$41,000). The due d'Anjou bought for 20,000 francs his last work, "Returning from Field Labor in an Autumn Sunset." He also obtained for 40,000 francs Corot's painting of "Un Concert," which was sold by the painter to Dupre for 7,000 francs.

### WELL-PAID LITERATI.

EMILE ZOLA has been paid \$5,000 for the right to publish his new novel, "Money," in an evening paper.

RIDER HAGGARD, who is digging after Aztec treasures in Mexico, is reported to have made some rich finds.

MRS. AMELIA E. BARR, who now divides her talents with the Ledger and the Century, is said to make more money than does the Chief Justice of the United States.

GEORGE KENNAN, the Siberian traveler, lectured over 200 times last season, and is proud of the fact that he never missed a train or failed to present himself to his audience at the advertised time.

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH is working on short stories. Thomas Nelson Page, the talented Virginian, has planned three books and several short stories. Joel Chandler Harris is engaged on a boy's story of Southern life before the war. "The Marvel" will soon put forth two volumes.

MAJOR FOND will make at least \$75,000, possibly \$100,000, out of Stanley, whom he pays \$50,000 for fifty lectures. In addition to this he pays the traveling expenses of Mr. and Mrs. Stanley, so that it costs him about \$1,300 every time the explorer lectures. Fond never receives less than \$1,600, and frequently gets \$5,000 for a lecture.

### Tobacco Chewing Warning.

Says a tobaccoist in the Boston Saturday Evening Gazette: "For a long time the old American habit of tobacco chewing has been on the decline. Nearly half the men used to chew years ago, but very few if them do it now. The calls for a plug of chewing tobacco lasted all day long, but you will wait an hour now before you hear such a call. It was not only the workmen who indulged in the habit but also the swells and the business people. The Southerners were nearly all chewers and so were the Westerners, but the quid has gone out of fashion here."











## CHINESE ETIQUETTE.

### Signs of Progress in the Flowery Kingdom.

The Emperor inaugurates some new measures and gives yearly audiences to the Ambassadors of other countries.

A decree has been issued at Peking announcing that the Emperor will grant a yearly audience to all foreign Ministers.

That is not much in itself, says the New York Sun, but, taken with a similar piece of news from Siam a few months ago that the King had decreed that his nobles need no longer approach him on their stomachs, it goes to indicate that what we call Western civilization is beginning to work even among the most conservative of peoples.

The Emperor of China is the mightiest of all rulers, in his own estimation. He is "The Son of Heaven and Father of His People," equal to the gods whom he graciously consents to worship, and quite above the necessity of being polite to representatives of foreign Governments. So, only occasionally, when he feels as if he'd like to look at the "foreign devils," he has ever granted audiences to the Ambassadors and Ministers from other countries; and his new departure is, therefore, particularly striking, and in its nature a very strong precedent for his successors. In fact, if he really does as he says he will do, his successors will have to follow him; for the customs of the Chinese are as the laws of the Medes and Persians—they alter not, unless the Emperor has a mind to change them.

A feature of the so-called "audiences," which up to 1873 were granted to the foreign Ministers, was the ceremony of the kowtow, insisted on by the Chinese court functionaries, generally resisted by the foreign Ministers, occasionally, and since 1873 always, graciously waived by the son of heaven and the father of his people. It was an abasement to the ground of the body of a person approaching the Majesty of China, and a knocking of the head of that person upon the ground a certain number of times to satisfy the demand of court etiquette; and, like so many other things in China, it was founded by Confucius, though the sage's book, "Li-Ki," doesn't say a word about it.

The word kowtow (it is spelled also kotow, koton, kotow, kotow, kotu, kotu, and has been adopted into the English language) is derived from two Chinese words, k'ow 'low, meaning "a knocking of the head." It is the eighth and highest grade of obeisance, rendered only to the Emperor and his equals, the gods, and though we speak of it always as the kowtow, that name is applied properly only to the fifth grade. That consists of kneeling and knocking the head once upon the ground. The sixth grade is the san kao; the performer kneels and knocks his head three times. The seventh grade is the lub kao; it consists in kneeling and knocking the head thrice, rising, kneeling again and knocking the head three times more. The eighth grade is the san kwai kiu kao, which is the kowtow performed three times. All the time, too, that the san kwai kiu kao, the "three kneelings and nine knockings," is going on the imperial band plays to the tune lung ting, "a splendid humiliation." Altogether, the Chinese nobles who have the privilege of an audience must be devoutly grateful that the Emperor is no higher than the immortal gods.

Now this kowtow (meaning the obeisance of the highest grade) is performed by the Kings of Cochinchina, Korea and other tributary States when they are confirmed by the Emperor in their succession to their thrones, and as Sir John Francis Davis in his book on China points out, is exactly the same as the homage performed by tenants in capite in the feudal times, and therefore is an overt recognition of the Emperor of China as overlord of the person making the kowtow. For this reason the Ministers and Legates of foreign Governments have almost invariably refused to perform the ceremony; and though the Chinese officials have insisted in most instances they have had to yield on the point, and the "audiences," at which a yellow curtain did duty for the Emperor, were not enlivened by the spectacle of gentlemen in gold-laced uniforms or in dress suits kneeling ungraciously and ruffling both shirt-fronts and tempers in acrobatic performances for which their garments were not adapted.

The Dutch Ambassadors in 1855 performed the kowtow before the yellow curtain, hoping to receive valuable concessions for trade. They had been told that the Emperor would send them food from his own table; they got "some sheep's trotters on a dirty plate" by way of food from the Emperor's table, and further received permission to send an embassy every eight years and four ships with it. Again in 1893 the Dutch Ambassador abused himself, but Holland got no greater benefits from the Chinese than did other countries whose representatives had not kowtowed. In 1793 the first Ambassador from Great Britain, Lord Macartney, had an audience with the yellow curtain, and did not do either the kowtow or san kwai kiu kao; but when Lord Amherst arrived in China in 1816 the ceremony was demanded of him, and on his refusal to perform it he failed to obtain a sight even of the yellow curtain and left Peking the very day he reached there.

In 1859 the American Minister refused to kowtow, but he did not get an audience. Again in 1873 our Minister, F. F. Low, refused to perform the kowtow, although the Chinese foreign Minister offered to burn incense in front of the President, but the Emperor settled the matter himself June 29, 1873, by receiving in person the Japanese Ambassador separately and afterward receiving the Ministers of the United States, Great Britain, France and Holland, and the latest news indicates that the son of heaven is going to be positively polite to Ambassadors, as well as merely negatively courteous to them.

## HYPNOTISM.

### A Study in the Mysterious and Baffling Art.

An interesting description of the Call That Comes in by Seven Degradation Its Victim—How Mind-Reading Is Accomplished.

What most deeply interests the uninitiated mind concerning hypnotism is the exaggerated conditions which are reported. I propose to give my description, writes Arthur Howton in New York World, which will unburden this so-called weird art of many misrepresentations. I must say, however, that it more than fulfills the claims of its exponents in that it is a useful and extremely powerful adjunct in minor surgical operations, on account of the ease with which local or general anesthesia may be produced, not to mention its value as a sedative and nerve recuperator; also it is fair to say that mind-reading done by hypnotic subjects is sometimes almost inexplicable. It is this last fact which keeps the old "magnetism" alive. According to the best authorities there are seven stages of hypnotism with well marked characteristics.

The first stage of hypnotism is the leger somnolence, or light sleep of Dr. Liebaud. In this stage the subject is in an ordinary dose, produced by a gentle, monotonous movement of the hands in the form of passes, fixing the patient's eyes steadily upon some bright small object, thus producing slight cerebral exhaustion. There is no special peculiarity about this stage except that the subject is more susceptible to suggestion, but the least noise or burlesque movement will restore his equanimity; the subject in this condition has not lost consciousness.

The second stage or somnolence profound, is also named by Dr. Liebaud, of Nancy, and the special characteristics are that the subject is in a deep sleep, but retains consciousness of what is going on around him. He is in a state of very much increased susceptibility to suggestion—so much so, in fact, that if told that he can not open his eyes he can not do so. His general condition is one of natural sleep except that in ordinary sleep the patient hears nothing, and a sound will awake him, whereas in this sleep the patient if spoken to will answer, and even loud noises will not startle him. This stage is induced by continuation of the method given for the first stage.

The third stage, of somnambulism is the first in which the subject completely loses control of his actions. In this condition he hears and sees no one except the operator, unless he is placed in harmony with him. There is also in this condition a certain association of ideas, in that the somnambulist if set to washing his hands will not continue the operation forever, but will, after a reasonable time, ask for a towel. This condition is lost in deeper stages. In this condition there is a skin-deep insensibility to pain, and the pupils of the eyes are contracted; but the greatest peculiarity of this stage lies in the hyperesthetic powers induced in some subjects. It is to this peculiarity that we owe the wonders of mind reading, as in this condition a good subject's senses are so infinitely sharpened that they can catch a clew given by an operator which would fail to reach the sharpest un hypnotized person in the world.

The fourth stage is catalepsy. This is the first stage which is absolutely pathological, and is not, as in the former stages, merely psychical effects. In this stage the subject's muscles are all in a flaccid or wax-like condition, and if the subject's limbs are placed in position, no matter how awkward or uncomfortable it may be, he will retain it, while his breathing and pulse will remain more regular than any one in a normal condition could possibly attempt to simulate. This has been proven by the sphymographic charts of Tamburine and Seppili. In this stage the ocular and petellar reflex is almost entirely deficient.

The fifth stage is lethargy. This is a stage which is dangerous for any one not fully competent and with long experience to meddle with, on account of the acute tetanus which always accompanies it. The general idea is expressed by the German investigators that these effects are produced by suggestion and limitation. This is erroneous, however, as has been demonstrated by the clinique of Prof. Charcot at la Salpêtrière, Paris. The special symptoms are first, an entirely relaxed condition of the muscles, so that if the subject is raised up and let fall he will drop in a heap, and without the least ability to better his position. Secondly, there is a neuro-muscular hyperexcitability which manifests itself upon the least stimulation. For instance, if the master or muscle of the jaw is touched it will contract as from a tetanic spasm.

The danger lies in the liability of these tetanic contractions spreading and involving some vital organ, or even reaching the heart. It is beyond all power of man to simulate these symptoms. Thirdly, association of ideas is entirely absent, and the brain is functionally inactive.

The sixth stage, or complete catalepsy, is never induced except for scientific investigation or for extreme surgical operations. All the muscles except those concerned in the circulation and respiration are rigidly contracted. All reflexes and mental phenomena are absent, and long continuance in this condition, sometimes called deep trance, may cause the subject to pass quietly into

The seventh stage, or death.

Soap from Corn.  
It is claimed that an Eastern chemist has discovered a process of making soap from corn. The discovery has excited considerable attention and promises to give not only a new corn market, but to revolutionize the art of soap-making. The soap made from corn is said to be absolutely pure and better than the finest toilet soaps now made.

## FRAUDULENT COINS.

### The Use of Electricity in "Doozing" Gold Pieces.

Galvanic Batteries Employed in the Process of Removing Gold from Coins—The Immense Loss Through Abuses.

Short-weight gold coins are becoming annoyingly common, says the Philadelphia Inquirer. Bankers and others are frequently coming across light pieces. The discovery a few days ago of nearly \$300 in light \$2.50 gold pieces tendered in payment of custom duties by a prominent importer has led to the detection of numerous pieces short in weight, showing that there is in operation a systematic scheme for robbing the Government by means of stealing metal from coins. Officers of the United States secret service are now at work in this city endeavoring to trace the coins through different hands and find the offenders.

The process of robbery, which is familiarly known as "sweating" coins, was formerly practiced to a large extent, but of late years few instances of it have come to the attention of the authorities. It is not highly profitable, and at best, under the old methods of extracting the metal, it did not afford much more than a living.

From a careful examination of the light pieces which are now being found, it is evident that the thief is not doing his work by the old hand method of shaking the coins in a bag and then gathering the dust by means of quicksilver, but that he has brought into requisition the rapid agency of electricity. The service of an ordinary galvanic battery and some cheap acid is all that is necessary to conduct the operation by the electric process. The scheme is similar to that employed in plating with gold by electricity. The coin is placed in the fluid, and attached to it are wires from the poles to the battery leading to another piece of metal prepared to receive, in the form of plating, the metal to be removed from the coin. The battery being set in motion, sufficient gold to form a plating is quickly transferred, and as it is removed uniformly from all parts of the coin the liability of disfigurement is reduced to a minimum. The only effect is to blur the characters slightly.

An authority at the mint has estimated that about 50 cents' worth of gold can be removed in this way from a \$10 gold piece without exciting the suspicion of the casual observer. To the skilled eye of an expert, however, the effect is generally apparent at a glance, and it does not always require the scales to determine whether the coin is correct or not. In the New York treasury there is one man, Tandy by name, who, by years of experience in the handling of coin, has become so expert in his judgment that he can tell by mere touch with closed eyes whether a piece is of spurious metal or whether it is a genuine coin that has been tampered with. In this respect he is not approached by any other person in the world.

The electric process of stealing from coins is not altogether a new scheme. The Government officials a few years ago captured in Northern New York a band of Italians who were operating extensively on this plan. Few but foreigners practice "sweating" in this country. It is an institution of theft much more common in Europe than on this side of the Atlantic, and those who operate here are usually persons who have been driven from their country for the same reason. The enterprise does not yield sufficient inducement in the way of easy labor and large returns to tempt the average native-born swindler, and it is mostly monopolized by a class content to live on little and hoard small savings.

Some idea of the readiness with which gold can be removed from coins is found in the result of a series of investigations made some years ago in the mint. It was shown that \$5 was lost by abrasion every time \$1,000,000 in gold coin was handled. The experiments were conducted with bags containing \$5,000 each, and it was shown that the mere lifting of the 300 bags making up \$1,000,000 to a truck to be removed to another vault resulted in the loss stated, and that their transfer from the truck again made a second similar loss.

Gold while in circulation is handled less than any other medium. It is usually kept in the vaults of banks for demand rarely made, and for this reason the loss by abrasion is but one-half of 1 per cent. in twenty years. In a \$20 gold piece, the standard weight of which is 516 grains, the Government allowance for loss by abrasion is 2.58 grains, but except in cases where the coins have been tampered with by "sweaters" the loss rarely exceeds this limit.

By an order issued some time ago by the Treasury Department at Washington the light \$2.50 coins found the other day were stamped with "L," indicating that they were light. Shortly after the late Daniel M. Fox was appointed superintendent of the mint in this city the Secretary of the Treasury issued a similar order. A stamp was procured, but protest being made Superintendent Fox's attention was called to the matter and he decided that he had no authority in justice to mutilate the property of another, so the stamp was put away and never used at the mint. Light coins finding their way into the custom-house will not, however, receive such courteous consideration. The name of the importer who tendered the light \$2.50 pieces has been withheld by the custom-house authorities with the view of facilitating the tracing of the coins through other hands and the capturing of the "sweater."

A Temple Built of Bones.  
There is a Temple of Siva, near Allahabad in India, surrounded by a high mound, composed wholly of the fragments of earthen bottles. On one of the last days of February, twenty thousand to forty thousand pilgrims assemble, each being provided with two or three earthen bottles containing water from the Ganges and a few copper coins.

## STAMP COLLECTORS.

### Enthusiasts Who Are Devoted to Their Hobby.

A Brief Outline of the History of Postage Stamp Collecting in This Country—An Extensive and Lucrative Business.

The enthusiasm of collectors of rare postage-stamps and the amount of money spent annually in the purchase of the little colored bits of paper will cause surprise when one remembers that stamps for postage first came into use in 1840, says the New York Times. It seems impossible that the demand for rare stamps has become so great that men arm themselves like explorers and visit countries infested by highwaymen to secure specimens of the stamp-maker's art. To-day there are millions of dollars invested in the business, which extends all over civilized countries, and is kept informed by about forty journals devoted to the interests of stamp collectors.

That rare postage stamps are literally hunted for with guns was verified by a collector of St. Louis, Mo., who recently returned from Mexico, whether he went for the purpose of obtaining specimens of the postage stamps in use in that country previous to 1873. Before that date envelopes were unknown in Mexico, and the postage stamps were pasted on the outside of the letter itself, which was made to answer the double purpose of letter and envelope. In order to secure these stamps it is necessary to get hold of old letter-files, and, as only letters of a business nature can be secured, the files of old merchant-houses offer almost the only means to the collector and dealer of getting at the coveted treasure. Family letters are never sold, and, indeed, it is seldom that owners of business letters will part with them, so the task of the collector in search of stamps in Mexico is not an easy one.

Through business connections the collector obtained access to the letter files of old firms in the City of Mexico, and some of these he was able to purchase. Hearing of an old house at Cuernavaca that would probably dispose of its files he decided to go there with his secretary, a Castilian. The town is about fifty miles southwest of the City of Mexico, and the road lies through a region infested by highwaymen.

When departing from the City of Mexico the stamp hunters were advised to leave all their valuables behind and arm themselves well, and they took the advice. They traveled part of the way by stage and part on horseback. They were not molested, for the road was at the time patrolled by mounted police for the entire distance.

"Stamp collecting," the collector says, "began almost as soon as the use of stamps became general, or about 1847. Great Britain used the first postage stamps in 1840. Brazil followed in 1843, and the United States in 1847. Before that postage was prepaid, as it is on express packages to-day. About 1838 the first journal devoted to the literature of postage stamps appeared in Belgium. It was a monthly publication, Le Timbre Poste. The first stamp paper started here was the Philatelic Journal of America in 1885. There are at present thirty to forty papers published in the interest of collectors, and six or seven of these are first-class journals. There are now three incorporated companies in this country which deal in stamps, and two of these are capitalized at \$30,000 each. New York has two companies and St. Louis one.

The value of stamps, like every thing else in trade, is regulated by the simple law of demand and supply. If a wealthy collector is without a certain specimen that specimen has an increased value, whether it be rare or not. Rare stamps are therefore frequently not as valuable as more common ones wanted by rich collectors. But, generally speaking, stamps which have been in use only a short time are the most difficult to get and the most expensive. There is no danger of stamps of recent date becoming as rare as those of former issues. Before Great Britain sent stamps to Mauritius they were printed there in plates, twenty impressions at a time. The result was that each of the twenty was different from the others in some minor detail. A rich collector is not satisfied with one Mauritius, but wants one of every variety, and this, of course, makes them valuable.

"The highest price ever paid for a single stamp at public auction in New York City was \$250 for a stamp issued by the postmaster at Brattleboro, Vt., before the Government issued stamps. A stamp issued at the New Haven post-office sold in St. Louis three years ago for \$108. Much higher prices than these have been paid at private sale for early issues of stamps of British Guiana and Mauritius. Colonial governments often run out of stamps of a certain value, and, being unable to get them at once from the mother country, they stamp the desired value on other stamps. For instance, a French colony may run out of stamps valued at 50 centimes, and will print on their 25-centime stamps '50,' thus making a new issue. This will create a demand for this new variety when the supply of regular 50-centime stamps arrives.

The government officers can therefore print any number of these 'emergency' stamps, hold them until they become rare, and then dispose of them to collectors. These are called 'surcharge' stamps, and the postmasters in the French provinces have made them so often, without any reason for doing so other than for their own private gain, that the sentiment against this kind of postage stamps has grown so strong that an 'anti-surcharge stamp association' has been formed in this country. Of course there are innumerable imitations made to sell to children and amateur collectors. These counterfeits are especially common in Germany and Switzerland. When there last summer I saw them displayed in shop windows of all the large cities. It is, of course, very easy for one familiar with stamps to detect a counterfeit."—N. Y. Times.

## THE GHOST DANCE.

### Is Not New But Was Invented by Captain Jack, the Modoc.

"People have been led to believe that the ghost dance is original with the Sioux," said an old frontiersman to a Denver Republican man recently. "This is a mistake. Captain Jack, of Modoc fame, is the Nestor of the ghost dance, although it was not known then by that name. The present Sioux dance, although it has received a few extra embellishments, but it is simply nothing more or less than the old Modoc war dance.

"Captain Jack, during the days of peace preceding the Modoc war, attended a dance given at a frontier tavern, at which he was a spectator, evidently deeply interested. When he went back to his tepee he was seized with a desire to introduce some new features in the Modoc dances. So, after a consultation with a few of his trusted lieutenants, he inaugurated a grand circle dance. The Indians kept going continuously to the left to the music of tom-toms, dancing as they went with wild disregard to musical precision, but with great enthusiasm. Finally, 'Bear Faced Charley' fainted with exhaustion. The dance was stopped. When he regained his senses he graphically described what a wonderful vision he had experienced. He had seen Wee Na Katab, the most powerful of early-day Modoc chiefs, when the tribe was in the zenith of its glory. The spirit of the chief told him that by killing the first three white men who came into their reservation all the land would be restored to them and that all dead Modocs would be brought to life. The story made a great impression on the Indians, and the fate of General Canby and the Peace Commission in 1873 tells how rigidly the Modoc chiefs carried out the 'spiritual' suggestion.

"After the death of the commission this same tribe held one of their circle dances around their remains, and with war-whoops and blood-thirsty hearts started on the long campaign among the lava beds, where they picked off soldiers among the natural fortifications of the region. I have been in the Bad Lands of Dakota, and it is indeed equally as bad a country as the Oregon lava beds. A dance among Indians is always a prelude to trouble. In 1873 it was the circle dance. In 1890 it was the ghost dance. It is as natural for an Indian to use his feet and lungs before going on the war-path as it is for a fish to swim. It is part of their tradition. Superstition to a large extent pervades the breasts of the Indians, and they think that a war without the usual dance preface would be 'hooedooed.'

"The Sioux are not, in my estimation, the wickedest Indians to handle. They are the most cowardly tribe on American soil. The Blackfeet are the meanest and the Modocs the bravest—although every Indian believes in fighting in ambush. The Apaches are perhaps the most numerous and mercurial. The Blackfeet Indians have a ghastly ceremony when they don war-paint. They have a council of war. Then twelve squaws are huddled together and chant a weird death song. The oldest warriors, aged and unfit for further active campaigns, then draw lots as to which will sacrifice his blood and be a martyr for the new campaign. The one who draws the straw with a spot of black paint in the center then stabs himself in several places in the presence of the tribe. As he falls the blood gushes from his wounds. Into this blood each warrior dips his finger, emitting unearthly war-whoops as they do so. This is equivalent to an oath that they swear by the blood of their sacrificed comrade to be true to the commands of their chiefs and fight to the last.

"The Bannocks at Ross Fork agency are perhaps the best dressed Indians in the country. They are the dudes of the Nation in that respect. Ordinarily an Indian is slovenly, dirty and indifferent in his dress. The Bannocks, of Idaho, however, take good care of their blankets and have more pride than the usual run of redskins. They are great travelers also. They enjoy the privilege of free transportation on all the Union Pacific trains, provided they ride on freight cars or the blind baggage. They are so well behaved that the Indian agent allows them leave of absence whenever they wish to go."

## REAL AMAZONS.

### Salvadorian Women Shouldered Rifles and Fought for Their Country.

Women's right to bear arms is undisputed. Her desire to bear arms and to shoulder her gun and go soldiering to war with men is not of frequent occurrence, however, says the New Orleans Picayune. We read of Amazons, but do not often see them, except those of the impossible sort who are dreams of loveliness in Amazon marches on the burlesque stage. The recent disturbances in Central America have brought to the front a class of patriotic women ready and willing to fight for their rights as men fight, and they are the women who should have all the rights men have in selecting officials, holding office, or in the management of their Government.

The following tribute to Salvadorian Amazons has been translated from a recent number of El Mensajero de Salvador. "Among the numerous army of veterans which came to this capital on Sunday we observed several women, who, shouldering their guns, with belts girded to their loins, marched, keeping time to the drums, and showing by their bearing and demeanor as much discipline as the best soldier. It can not be denied that Salvador, as far as the defense and preservation of its rights is concerned, stands among the first nations of America since the woman, though strong in these cases, volunteers willingly to go into the battle-field, not only to be of use in lending succor to her wounded husband or son, who fight for their rights, but also to her country, by shouldering a rifle and firing on the enemy cartridges, which by nature she would fear even to touch. There, we say, must exist great love of country, profound patriotism and great zeal for their liberty and independence for their fatherland."

## Cure for Diphtheria.

A peasant physician named Rieger, of Olgen, in Silesia, announced a cure for diphtheria which an agent of the Emperor has examined and reported very favorably upon. It is thought to be a mixture of extracts from two or three common weeds and an oil. The sales resulting from the mixture is liquefied, and applied with a brush to the interior of the throat. The remedy was discovered by Rieger's father, a shepherd. It was applied by him only to external wounds. Once, when young Rieger's whole herd was dying of diphtheria, he, in despair of all other means, began treating their throats with the salve. The favorable effect was apparent almost immediately, and in a few days every head of cattle was well again. Shortly afterward diphtheria became epidemic in the village. Rieger was invariably called to give his remedy in the most severe cases, and almost without exception it was followed by recovery. Gradually its fame spread, till to-day he is receiving calls to cure persons of diphtheria all over Germany. The cures that have contributed most to his reputation were effected a few weeks ago in the family of the Freiherr von Falkenhause in Berlin.

What the world needs to-day is not more medicine, but less of it. Not new methods of shutting out sunlight and the only true elixir of life, but more pure air to breathe, pure water to drink, pure food to eat, less overwork and overworry, more rational methods of labor with many toilers with brain and hand, more wholesome exercise and a calmer, more cheerful frame of mind. Tens of thousands die before their time through consuming fear of unseen and purely imaginary foes, and other tens of thousands through false teaching, the influence of false ideas, and, in consequence, of senseless violation of nature's plainest laws. Instead of losing our grip on life, we of this generation ought to be getting a firmer hold. Our boasted modern ways are pitifully weak and unreliable, asserts the Philadelphia Telegraph. It will take a hundred Kochs to lift us above the ever-swellingly tide that is sweeping mankind so helplessly along toward the end of all things human.

The Crimea Going to Waste.  
A St. Petersburg paper complains that the Crimea, though rich in natural resources, is neglected by the government. The editor remarks: "Some Crimean peasant digging in the ground has discovered coal, another has found a well of naphtha, a third has stumbled upon a layer of sulphate of soda, a fourth has shovelled up some gold dust; but we hear little of special scientific commissions appointed to explore the mineral wealth of our peninsula. Year by year the irrigation of the Crimea is getting worse; the rivers are drying up, and nothing is done to check the evil. The quicksands from the deserts overflow large tracts of arable soil, miles of fecund lands are covered by them every year, and nothing is done to stop their encroachment, either by irrigation or by the planting of trees on their present limits. Swarms of locusts and other destructive insects destroy the best crops every year and no effort is made to counteract this evil."

Mania for Handkerchiefs.  
An extraordinary case of monomania has been developed at Vienna. A baker's assistant there has stolen no less than six hundred and forty-six pocket handkerchiefs, not for their value but because an irresistible longing to possess them has prompted him to do so. He never sold them but used to carry them about with him constantly. He was first punished in 1888, when he was condemned to a fortnight's imprisonment for stealing twenty-seven handkerchiefs. He was sentenced to the same penalty three years later for a similar offense, but the police, instead of handing him over to the jailer, sent him to the hospital to have his mental condition examined. The doctors declared him to be suffering from acute monomania. He says that when he sees a lady's handkerchief hanging out of her pocket he can not help taking it.

Women Physicians.  
It is interesting to know, says the New York Ledger, that there are about twenty-five hundred women in the United States who hold diplomas from medical colleges, either American or foreign. The first woman doctor is said to be Elizabeth Blackwell, who graduated in 1848. The first one in Sweden is Karoline Widerstrom, who has since been engaged by the Thule Life Insurance Company to examine women who wish to insure their lives. The physician of the Milwaukee County Hospital is Dr. Anna McConnell. Boston, probably, has more women doctors, in proportion to its population, than any other city. In walking through the streets, one is struck by the signs which read "Dr. Mary So-and-so" or "Dr. Jane So-and-so," in place of the usual "Dr. John Brown," or "Dr. Henry Adams," as the case might be.

An Essex Wizard.  
It would appear that superstition has not entirely died out in Essex, says the London Standard. In the village of Sible Hedingham lives an old laborer, who is popularly supposed to be a wizard. Recently he told a man in charge of a load of straw that he would not get far with it, and a little further on the horse, an old one, fell, and was so injured that it had to be killed on the spot. The man called upon to assist was so convinced that the influence of the wizard that they refused to move the carcass until a slice of flesh had been cut from the hind quarter of the animal and burned in a bush, fagot, the idea being that the person who cast the spell would suffer burning in a corresponding part of his body.

A Workman Did It.  
A calker in a Boston ship yard, working as a supernumerary at \$1.50 per day, has invented a calking machine with which one man can do the work of six. Nearly every labor-saving device has been invented by laboring men, strange as it may seem.